

INSPECTIONS AND APPEALS DEPARTMENT[481]

Notice of Intended Action

Twenty-five interested persons, a governmental subdivision, an agency or association of 25 or more persons may demand an oral presentation hereon as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)“b.”

Notice is also given to the public that the Administrative Rules Review Committee may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this proposed action under section 17A.8(6) at a regular or special meeting where the public or interested persons may be heard.

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code sections 10A.104(5) and 135B.7, the Department of Inspections and Appeals hereby gives Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 51, “Hospitals,” Iowa Administrative Code.

This rule implements Iowa Code section 135B.34, which requires hospitals to conduct criminal record checks and child abuse and dependent adult abuse record checks of prospective employees and includes changes made during the 2013 legislative session. Specific changes contained in the rule deal with conditional employment and the transfer of employees from one facility to another facility owned by the same business entity.

The Department does not believe that the proposed rule imposes any financial hardship on any regulated entity, body, or individual.

The Hospital Licensing Board approved the proposed rule at its October 24, 2013, meeting.

The State Board of Health initially reviewed the proposed rule at its November 13, 2013, meeting.

Any interested person may make written suggestions or comments on the proposed rule on or before December 31, 2013. Such written materials should be addressed to the Director, Department of Inspections and Appeals, Lucas State Office Building, 321 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0083; faxed to (515)242-6863; or e-mailed to david.werning@dia.iowa.gov.

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 135B.7 and 135B.34 and 2013 Iowa Acts, Senate File 347.

The following amendment is proposed.

Adopt the following new rule 481—51.41(135B):

481—51.41(135B) Criminal, dependent adult abuse, and child abuse record checks.

51.41(1) Definitions. The following definitions apply for the purposes of this rule.

“*Background check*” or “*record check*” means criminal history, child abuse and dependent adult abuse record checks.

“*Direct services*” means services provided through person-to-person contact. “Direct services” excludes services provided by individuals such as building contractors, repair workers, or others who are in a hospital for a very limited purpose, who are not in the hospital on a regular basis, and who do not provide any treatment or services for the patients of the hospital.

“*Employee*” means any individual who is paid, either by the hospital or any other entity (i.e., temporary agency, private duty, Medicare/Medicaid or independent contractors).

“*Evaluation*” means review by the department of human services to determine whether a founded child abuse, dependent adult abuse or criminal conviction warrants the person’s being prohibited from employment in a hospital.

“*Indirect services*” means services provided without person-to-person contact such as those provided by administration, dietary, laundry, and maintenance.

51.41(2) Requirements for employer prior to employing an individual. Prior to employment of a person in a hospital, the hospital shall request that the department of public safety perform a criminal history check and that the department of human services perform child and dependent adult abuse record checks of the person in this state.

a. *Informing the prospective employee.* A hospital shall ask each person seeking employment by the hospital, “Do you have a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse or have you ever been convicted of a crime in this state or any other state?” The person shall also be informed that a background check will be conducted. The person shall indicate, by signature, that the person has been informed that the background check will be conducted.

b. *Conducting a background check.* The hospital may access the single contact repository (SING) to perform the required background check. If the SING is used, the hospital shall submit the person’s maiden name, if applicable, with the background check request. If SING is not used, the hospital must obtain a criminal history check from the department of public safety and a check of the child and dependent adult abuse registries from the department of human services.

c. *If a person considered for employment has been convicted of a crime.* If a person being considered for employment in a hospital has been convicted of a crime under a law of any state, the department of public safety shall notify the hospital that upon the request of the hospital the department of human services will perform an evaluation to determine whether the crime warrants prohibition of the person’s employment in the hospital.

d. *If a person considered for employment has a record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse.* If a department of human services child or dependent adult abuse record check shows that a person being considered for employment in a hospital has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse, the department of human services shall notify the hospital that upon the request of the hospital the department of human services will perform an evaluation to determine whether the founded child or dependent adult abuse warrants prohibition of employment in the hospital.

e. *Employment pending evaluation.* The hospital may employ a person for not more than 60 calendar days pending the completion of the evaluation by the department of human services if all of the following apply. The 60-day period begins on the first day of the person’s employment.

(1) The person is being considered for employment other than employment involving the operation of a motor vehicle;

(2) The person does not have a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse;

(3) The person has been convicted of a crime that is a simple misdemeanor offense under Iowa Code section 123.47 or Iowa Code chapter 321 or a first offense of operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated under Iowa Code section 321J.2, subsection 1; and

(4) The hospital has requested an evaluation to determine whether the crime warrants prohibition of the person’s employment.

f. *Validity of background check results.* The results of a background check conducted pursuant to this rule shall be valid for a period of 30 calendar days from the date the results of the background check are received by the hospital.

51.41(3) *Employment prohibition.* A person who has committed a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse shall not be employed in a hospital unless an evaluation has been performed by the department of human services.

51.41(4) *Transfer of an employee to another hospital owned or operated by the same person.* If an employee transfers from one hospital to another hospital owned or operated by the same person, without a lapse in employment, the hospital is not required to request additional criminal and child and dependent adult abuse record checks of that employee.

51.41(5) *Transfer of ownership of a hospital.* If the ownership of a hospital is transferred, at the time of transfer the background check required by this rule shall be performed for each employee for whom there is no documentation that such background check has been performed. The hospital may continue to employ such employee pending the performance of the background check and any related evaluation.

51.41(6) *Change of employment—person with criminal or abuse record—exception to record check evaluation requirements.* A person with a criminal or abuse record who is or was employed by a certified hospital and is hired by another certified hospital shall be subject to the background check.

a. A reevaluation of the latest record check is not required, and the person may commence employment with the other hospital if the following requirements are met:

(1) The department of human services previously performed an evaluation concerning the person's criminal or abuse record and concluded the record did not warrant prohibition of the person's employment;

(2) The latest background check does not indicate a crime was committed or founded abuse record was entered subsequent to the prior evaluation;

(3) The position with the subsequent employer is substantially the same or has the same job responsibilities as the position for which the previous evaluation was performed;

(4) Any restrictions placed on the person's employment in the previous evaluation by the department of human services and still applicable shall remain applicable in the person's subsequent employment; and

(5) The person subject to the background check has maintained a copy of the previous evaluation and provided it to the subsequent employer, or the previous employer provides the previous evaluation from the person's personnel file pursuant to the person's authorization. If a physical copy of the previous evaluation is not provided to the subsequent employer, a current record check evaluation shall be performed.

b. For purposes of this subrule, a position is "substantially the same or has the same job responsibilities" if the position requires the same certification, licensure, or advanced training. For example, a licensed nurse has substantially the same or the same job responsibilities as a director of nursing; a certified nurse aide does not have substantially the same or the same job responsibilities as a licensed nurse.

c. The subsequent employer must maintain the previous evaluation in the employee's personnel file for verification of the exception to the requirement for a record check evaluation.

d. The subsequent employer may request a reevaluation of the background check and may employ the person while the reevaluation is being performed, even though an exemption under paragraph 51.41(6) "a" may be authorized.

51.41(7) *Employee notification of criminal convictions or founded abuse after employment.* If a person employed by an employer that is subject to this rule is convicted of a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse entered in the abuse registry after the person's employment application date, the person shall inform the employer of such information within 48 hours of the criminal conviction or entry of the record of founded child or dependent adult abuse.

a. The employer shall act to verify the information within 48 hours of notification. "Verify," for purposes of this subrule, means to access the single contact repository (SING) to perform a background check, to request a criminal background check from the department of public safety, to request an abuse record check from the department of human services, to conduct an online search through the Iowa Courts Online Web site, or to contact the county clerk of court office and obtain a copy of relevant court documents.

b. If the information is verified, the hospital shall follow the requirements of paragraphs 51.41(2) "c" and "d."

c. The employer may continue to employ the person pending the performance of an evaluation by the department of human services.

d. A person who is required by this subrule to inform the person's employer of a conviction or entry of an abuse record and fails to do so within the required period commits a serious misdemeanor under Iowa Code section 135C.33.

e. The employer may notify the county attorney for the county where the employer is located of any violation or failure by an employee to notify the employer of a criminal conviction or entry of an abuse record within the period required under this subrule.

51.41(8) *Hospital receipt of credible information that an employee has been convicted of a crime or founded for abuse.* If the hospital receives credible information, as determined by the hospital, from someone other than the employee, that the employee has been convicted of a crime or a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse has been entered in the abuse registry after employment, and the employee has not informed the employer of the information within the time required by subrule 51.41(7), the hospital shall take the following actions:

a. The hospital shall act to verify credible information within 48 hours of receipt. “Verify,” for purposes of this subrule, means to access the single contact repository (SING) to perform a background check, to request a criminal background check from the department of public safety, to request an abuse record check from the department of human services, to conduct an online search through the Iowa Courts Online Web site, or to contact the county clerk of court office and obtain a copy of relevant court documents.

b. If the information is verified, the hospital shall follow the requirements of paragraphs 51.41(2) “*c*” and “*d*.”

51.41(9) *Proof of background checks for temporary employment agencies and contractors.* Proof of background checks may be kept in the files maintained by temporary employment agencies and contractors. Facilities may require temporary employment agencies and contractors to provide a copy of the result of the background checks. Copies of such results shall be made available to the department upon request.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 135B.7 and 135B.34 and 2013 Iowa Acts, Senate File 347.